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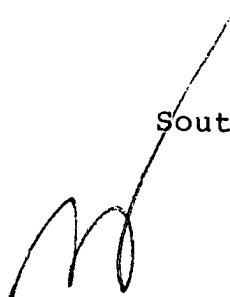

Memorandum for DCI

IRAN: The US Response on the Hostages

I believe the US responses to the Iranians are a substantial improvement over the first US submissions because the current set of documents backs away from the detailed/legalistic approach. It provides forthright responses to Iranian queries. In its answers, the US much more clearly and simply than in the earlier document assents to the Majlis' four demands.

The current document's generally positive tone is obviously meant to encourage the Iranians. The responses more clearly place the ball in Tehran's court.

The current US responses much more than the earlier documents give the clerics room to make the policial decision to end the hostage problem. Nonetheless, as we noted to you yesterday, the time does not seem right for much optimism. There is a grave danger that the Iranians in their response will demand that the US begin implementation prior to a release of the hostages.



Deputy Chief
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